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PURSUIT POLICIES

Associated Press: Connecticut considers restrictions on police chases after pursuits that ended with deaths

Connecticut officials are considering restricting when police statewide can chase cars and trucks in response to what appears to be an increase in dangerous pursuits, including several that ended with deaths or serious injuries over the past few years.

State public safety Commissioner James Rovella and state Rep. Joe Verrengia led efforts to create a working group that will review the state's 19-year-old police pursuit policy and produce a report to state lawmakers, likely by October. The panel is expected to begin meeting next month and includes police officials, community leaders and civil rights advocates.

Police departments around the country, including in New Haven, Connecticut, have restricted pursuits only to when the fleeing driver has committed the most serious of crimes, and officers retain the discretion of whether to chase those drivers. The new working group is expected to consider a similar policy.

BODY-WORN CAMERAS

KHOU Houston: Houston Police hit roadblock in implementing body camera policy for undercover officers

A new Houston Police policy to put body-worn cameras on undercover officers serving warrants is stuck in neutral. There is resistance from agents outside of the Houston Police Department who are uncomfortable with what such video could reveal.

Federal agents who work with HPD narcotics detectives on a multi-agency task force are concerned about confidentiality. Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo said it is an issue his department expects to quickly resolve.

"We're rolling with it," Chief Acevedo said. "The question is what impact will that have on our multi-agency task force."

Note: This issue will be discussed at PERF's Town Hall Meeting next Thursday in Miami Beach.

JUVENILES

Dallas Morning News: Here's why Dallas' police chief created a summer jobs program for teens

Dallas Police Chief U. Renee Hall says even though she grew up in "a very unsupported" area of Detroit, she never felt limited.

She said that's because she could always count on her mother, police officers and other mentors to keep her focused on her goals and her potential.

"I want to make sure I am in a position to give that back," Hall said.

As the school year is wrapping up, Hall on Tuesday announced a summer jobs program for Dallas teens called DPD to You(th). The initiative - Hall billed it as the department's first-ever summer jobs program - is meant to give kids something to do during high-crime summer months and connect police to underserved communities.

During the first year, the department will recruit 50 students from schools primarily in southern Dallas and place them in jobs with the city, nonprofits and the Dallas Police Department. Volunteers will mentor students during the summer.

JAILS

Minneapolis Star Tribune: Op-ed by Hennepin County Sheriff David Hutchinson: Change federal law to allow jails to treat inmates properly

As sheriff, an important part of my job is ensuring public safety - protecting the residents of Hennepin County from those people who commit criminal acts. Ultimately, we want to make sure that people who commit crimes don't reoffend.

Sometimes the best way to do that is to keep people locked in jail until their case is heard in court and they are sentenced to prison. Sometimes the best solution is to treat the underlying conditions that caused the offender to commit the crime in the first place. In either case, courts have held that jails are required to provide medical care to inmates that is consistent with the standard of care they would receive at medical facilities outside of jail.

Unfortunately, the federal government makes that very difficult.

Once inmates reach our facility, they are no longer eligible for the medical assistance they would receive on the outside. A federal law called the "Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy"

means that the care we provide at our facility - for mental health, chemical dependency treatment or any other medical issues - is paid for by county residents. It comes out of the sheriff's budget and our taxes. If these people were treated anywhere else outside of jail, their medical bills would be paid by Medicaid or state insurance.

OPIOIDS

Burlington (VT) Free Press: A life in recovery: From using his police badge to score to helping those in recovery

What ever became of Michael Lowe?

You may not remember the name, but you might remember the disgraced Vergennes police chief who, in June of 2009, passed out behind the wheel of his police cruiser high, then drove into a parked car.

Then came the revelations of drug addiction, embezzlement and prescription drug fraud, ending with a six-month prison sentence. And although Mike's career as a cop was destroyed, his path out of addiction is helping support Vermont's recovery community.

By today's standards, Mike's fall - although sensational because he was a police chief - is nothing rare. His recovery, however, speaks to how an increasing number of Vermonters are managing to survive one of the most difficult and deadly addictions of our time.

TRAINING

Chicago Tribune: Chicago police turn to virtual reality technology to train officers in how to deal with the mentally ill

Virtual reality technology will be used to help in training Chicago police officers on how to deal with people experiencing mental health episodes.

The pilot program will be folded into the department's crisis intervention training that became mandatory for officers as part of the federal consent decree aimed at overhauling how the city's historically troubled Police Department operates.

This marks the latest example of the department turning to technology to aid in its crime-fighting and officer-training efforts.

The training covers how officers should react to people with schizophrenia or autism who are having a mental health episode.

HOMELESSNESS

KATU Portland (OR): Concerned about police response times, Mayor

Wheeler eyes Eugene's CAHOOTS program

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler says calls about people in crisis on the streets take up too much time from law enforcement.

"I am very concerned about response times for police officers when there is a real public safety issue in our community," he told a KATU reporter. "The call volume through our emergency communication center is growing rapidly. And most of the new call volume we're getting is related to people in crisis on the streets."

He believes the city of Eugene may have the solution. It's called CAHOOTS, Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets. The 30-year-old program lightens the load for police and firefighters by helping people in non-emergency situations.

Note: PERF will be holding a panel discussion about innovative approaches to responding to persons in crisis next Friday at our Annual Meeting.

Salt Lake Tribune: Utah will test hidden technology that tries to find weapons among crowds at schools, stadiums and churches

Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes is partnering with Georgia-based Liberty Defense to test and promote a product that uses 3D imaging and artificial intelligence to detect concealed weapons on people in public spaces.

The company's product, HEXWAVE, can be hidden in walls and other structures as it scans for objects like guns, knives and explosives obscured by clothing or bags, according to a promotional video on the Liberty Defense website.

Park City police have had discussions with the company about testing it at the Sundance Film Festival. Because the imaging technology identifies objects, rather than the people carrying them, Reyes said he believes it could be less invasive than, say, facial recognition technology or even driver license scanners.

SHERIFFS

Philadelphia Inquirer: Rochelle Bilal wins primary election for Philadelphia sheriff in upset of Jewell Williams

In an upset, former Philadelphia Police Officer Rochelle Bilal beat incumbent Sheriff Jewell Williams in the Democratic primary Tuesday, ousting a party stalwart who was seeking a third term with the baggage of three sexual harassment lawsuits.

Bilal, 61, will likely be the first woman elected sheriff. She is president of the Guardian Civic League, a group that represents black police officers, and also secretary of the local NAACP chapter.

With 97 percent of returns in, Bilal was leading the four-way race by about 22,000 votes. It was a crushing defeat for Williams, who has been in elected office since 2001, first as a state representative. He has been sheriff since 2012.

"I've never run for office before, and I'm exhausted, but I'm excited," Bilal said. "I'm excited that people in this city saw something different and voted for us."

POLICE EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

NBC 5 Dallas-Ft. Worth: 'It was surprising:' Fort Worth's new interim police chief takes helm

Fort Worth's interim police chief Ed Kraus says he'll work to heal any wounds - both in the department and the community - after the firing of Police Chief Joel Fitzgerald.

Kraus said he planned no immediate changes and that the basic work of the police department will continue.

In a 26-year career, Kraus rose through the ranks from officer to executive assistant chief.

City managers said Kraus will remain as interim chief at least for a few months until a selection process is in place to hire someone permanently.

POLICE EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

New Haven (CT) Register: Former New Haven police chief to join Yale PD

Former city Police Chief Anthony Campbell soon will take on a new role as assistant chief of operations at the Yale Police Department, he said Tuesday.

"I'm very excited about it," said Campbell, a Yale graduate. "I feel very blessed to have been given the opportunity."

Campbell retired from the New Haven Police Department in March and took a job with the State Attorney's Office for New Haven.

He said Tuesday that the opportunity to join the Yale Police Department and work with Yale Police Chief Ronnell Higgins to further community policing was too enticing to pass up.

POLICE EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

Crain's Chicago Business: Lightfoot to keep police chief as she announces new team members

Mayor Lori Lightfoot announced who will head her planning and transportation departments,

her chief lobbyists and a new deputy mayor for economic development, continuing to unveil her management team.

In a statement, the mayor also indicated that she's keeping on the job many officials who headed other city agencies, even though they first were appointed by former Mayor Rahm Emanuel. Included: Chicago Public Schools CEO Janice Jackson, Chicago Transit Authority President Dorval Carter, Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson and Chicago Park District CEO Mike Kelly.

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